Councillor who championed waterfront redevelopment dies at 68

by **Alex Gregory**

A city councillor who helped spearhead the redevelopment of Mississauga's waterfront and championed many local initiatives has died.

Ward 1 Councillor Jim Tovey passed away suddenly Monday evening at the age of 68.

The announcement was made early Tuesday morning by Mayor Bonnie Crombie, who expressed shock and sadness over his sudden death.

"Jim led the charge to protect our waterfront and our waterways for future generations. He was a committed member of the Mississauga community his entire life," she said in a statement early Tuesday.

"Jim, you are forever in our hearts and your work will live on for generations to come."

Born and raised in what is now Malton, Tovey moved to Lakeview in 1989, and became involved with numerous community initiatives.

He founded the Lakeview Ratepayers' Association and served as President for many years, spearheading the fight to remove the Lakeview Coal Generating Station and create the Lakeview Legacy Project, a master plan that would see the city's eastern waterfront redeveloped with major community input.

The project, now known as Inspiration Lakeview, won two national awards for planning and led to Tovey being honored as Mississauga's Citizen of the Year in 2009.

Tovey was also instrumental in convincing the provincial government to abandon plans for a gas power plant in the Lakeview area, and for mounting a campaign to save the historic Small Arms Building and convert it into a space for collaborative art.

Tovey followed his career and decided to run for municipal politics, becoming the Ward 1 Councillor in 2010.

Among other accomplishments, Tovey represented the city for the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Cities Intiiative, a collaborative effort to restore and protect the St. Lawrence River and Great Lakes.

"Jim's positive impact on our community and the province cannot be overstated," said Charles Sousa, MPP for Mississauga South, who worked with Tovey on several municipal projects, including the redevelopment of the Lakeview waterfront.

"Jim made us all dream bigger and work harder to transform industrial lands and revitalize our precious waterfront into a destination where people can work, play and raise a family," Sousa said in a statement Tuesday afternoon.

Tovey most recently appeared at the launch of a photo exhibit showcasing the Lakeview waterfront, during which he spoke about the value of community collaboration.

Tovey is survived by his wife Lee, his son Daniel and a grandson.

Flags will be flown at half-mast at all city facilities.

The city has provided a book of condolences which will be displayed at the Mississauga Civic Centre. Residents are invited to sign the book and share their memories.

A public service will also be held this morning at City Hall Council Chambers, beginning at 9 a.m. Members of the public are invited to attend.

The previously-scheduled general committee meeting has been pushed to Jan. 24.

No word has been given on funeral arrangements.

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